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A MEK EGYESÜLET MEGBÍZÁSÁBÓL
AZ INTERNET SZOLGÁLTATÓK TANÁCSÁNAK
TÁMOGATÁSÁVAL KÉSZÜLT
AZ ORSZÁGOS SZÉCHÉNYI KÖNYVTÁR
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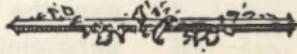


HUNGARIAN GRAPHIC

EDITOR IN CHIEF: NICHOLAS BIRÓ



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THE STATE OF THE PRINTING TRADE IN HUNGARY

BY EMERY KNER



INTENDING to give an account of the state of our industry in Hungary after the war, it will be sufficient to make a rough sketch of its development in time before the war, and to confront the two sober series of numbers showing an objective picture of the situation before and after the war.

It was well known even abroad that Hungary had before the war a considerably developed and firmly founded printing trade. From 1867 till the end of the first ten years of the nineteenth century Hungary passed through one of the most brilliant periods of its millenarian history, a period proving grand successes as well in the sphere of economy as in the range of civilization. The centuries old printing trade of our peripheries and mountainous regions was quickly brought up to date, and the Great Hungarian Plain, almost entirely devastated during the wars against the Turks lasting for many ages, rapidly gathered new strength after the regulation of the large rivers. The completion of the great and modern railway-system spread everywhere fresh vitality, an inspired all with new vigour. Hungary, being at this time a geographical and economic unity, had splendid prospects before it. Especially rapid was the course of development of our capital, Budapest, lying on both banks of the Danube, and being the point of junction of the great railway-lines, and therefore qualified to act as intermediary in the traffic between East and West. It is understood, that with the development of the province, printing-offices and

newspapers were established even in the towns of the Great Plain. Meanwhile the old art of printing kept on its slow and pacific flourishing in the mountainous regions, and it was a matter of course that the geographical and economic structure of the country and the advantageous situation of Budapest concentrated all efficient forces of this activity in the metropolis, and so Budapest became one of the modern capitals of Europe growing at a tremendous pace.

There are only few countries where the capital claims such a prevalent part in the economical and political life of the nation, as Budapest does in Hungary. At the time of reorganization of our railway-system, the minister of commerce, Gabriel Baross, a highly gifted man, took care of reinforcing this predominance of the capital by making of it a centre of the main railway-lines. Owing to the excellent and fast communication, the Budapest newspapers arrived in a few hours to all corners of the country. Consequently the province press was deprived of the chance of a further development whereas the Budapest newspapers expanded, acquired more influence, and became more important than those of other countries and in similar large cities. The press, the industry and commerce increasing immensely gave to the new metropolis a fresh rise and this impulsion raised our publishing trade too. Budapest had before the war firms of publishers so large and well organized as they were not to be found e. g. in Vienna. And though the pace of development up to now was too rapid, even a little too „American“, we were just about to fill the acquired technical and economical frames with a refined

civilization in order to make better and more intensive use of the cultural potentialities by the existing organizations.

This development has been rudely broken by war. The following numbers indicate the relation between the state before and after the war :

	June 27th 1914	August 29th 1922	%
Total territory of Hungary in square kil metres	282 870	91 114	68
Total population of Hungary	18,264.533	7,481.954	59
Budapest			
Printing offices	301	268	12
Printing presses	1505	1402	0.7
Printers employed	3752	2722	27
Assistants employed	1906	1695	11
Total of workers	5658	4417	24
Composing machines	216	236	9.5
Printers unemployed	323	682	112
Assistants unemployed	116	341	194
Total of unemployed	439	1023	133
Apprentices	559	151	73
Country			
Printing offices	974	332	66
Printing presses	2195	826	62
Printers employed	2989	917	69
Assistants employed	1317	364	73
Total of workers	4306	1281	70
Composing machines	97	44	55
Printers unemployed	145	213	32
Assistants unemployed	8	200	2400
Total of unemployed	153	413	170
Apprentices	1468	220	85

In order that one should be able to judge duly our losses, we have to add that we have lost, in consequence of the treaty of peace, besides a great part of territory and population, about 1327 factories, 90 p. c. of our woods, nearly all mines and raw materials and the immensely rich cornland of South Hungary.

The preponderance of the Budapest printing trade over that of the country was overwhelming even in time of peace. Though the number of printing-offices was less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the country-offices, and the number of printing-presses did not come to $\frac{3}{4}$ of those of the province, the number of composing machines formed more than the double of the whole province. Certainly, the large printing-offices of the metropolis had the task to provide the country (and there were only few exceptions) with all mass articles — as newspapers, almanacs, light and scientific literature, religious and prayer-books, as well as class-books written in the different languages of our polyglot population. Among the great number of small province printing-offices there were many established with the sole purpose of publishing a newspaper, so that they were out of work during the largest part of the year.

But the mighty printing industry of Budapest exists intact even in the Hungary after the war. The number of offices diminished by 30 or so, that of printing machines by about 100, and these

fall to the small firms which have stopped their work and bought their plants. But we have lost a very remarkable part of the printing trade of the province. There are left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the offices and $\frac{2}{5}$ of the machines of the peace-number. To-day the number of the province offices passes scarcely that of the capital and the total of workers of the province is not $\frac{1}{3}$ of the workers employed in Budapest. In time before the war the number of unemployed was quite small, and even this disappeared in the winter-months, now the number tripled, though very many workers emigrated or changed their profession. It is characteristic that the number of apprentices was always very high, and nothing could diminish it because the condition of printers seemed to be envied compared with other professions. At present the number of apprentices proves very evidently that the parents have no more hope for the success and earning a livelihood of their boys by this trade.

There can be no doubt about it that the new Hungary shall not be strong enough to support the immense printing trade of Budapest. The big offices which had their machines in full working order all the year round by the mass articles above mentioned, do not find to-day work enough, and are compelled to enter into competition with the smaller jobbingfirms. The number of our newspapers did not decrease, on the contrary, it increased in consequence of the recent political movements and the rising interest of the masses in political questions, and we see as a proof of it a larger number of composing machines than in the last years before the war. But though the greater part of the metropolis newspapers has guarded a high level, the copy-number of them is very modest, and so they will be obliged to cease to appear sooner or later. It is the same with our publishing business. But just in this domain great events occurred I shall speak of further down.

We Hungarian printers have guarded our faith in the times to come and the reason of our feeling able to proceed with our work is our unquestioning right to live and the circumstance that we have in our hands the pledge of the future we have prepared and deserved.

After ten years of destruction our mighty and perfectly organized printing houses exist in safe and sound condition and the spirit of knowledge, the devotion to our profession, our unflinching will and confidence live intrepidly.

The greater part of the generation we owe the

prosperity of the times before the war to, which was educated and carried by the impulsions of this happy period is still alive and works eagerly. But there is also a young generation full of confidence and ambition gathered from the experience of hard times who is supported by the spirit of invention acquired in the years of indigence. The mental force of our nation is unbroken and cannot be dejected. The nation living and working here for thousand years manifests an undiminished vitality as for the range of intellectual and economical questions. Our literature and art are ornaments of the civilization of Europe. The statistics shows that in 2377 new books came out in Hungary in 1913, and 2318 in 1922! The 7¹/₂ million Hungarians, living on a territory that forms only 1/3 of the Hungarian State before the war, and having great difficulties to contend with overcome, carried out as much mental work as the rich and happy people of the historical great Hungary. And there are

publishers between the narrow, strangling frontiers who possess faith and willing enough to make sacrifices, to publish these books, there are printers who find means to procure raw materials, to carry out the work and to secure the continuity of production.

In our country, diminished and reduced to poverty, the trades, formerly displaced and suppressed by the Austrian and Czech industries, take little by little strong roots; there are established new branches and built new factories, and the statistical dates indicate that Hungary will be fit to decrease, in a few years, its excessively large importation of textile goods to a very limited quantity of raw materials.

The elasticity and inventive faculty of the young generation and our intact mental forces guarantee us a better future, and the powerful emanation of these forces will open our narrow frontiers to the Hungarian book, the Hungarian press and the Hungarian printing trade.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN STYLE AND OUR TASTE

BY WILLIAM WANKO



IN No. 1 of this year the editor of our journal published a letter received from our colleague Mr. I. Gondos, New York, giving utterance to his views about the style cultivated by the Magyar Grafika. He declares to find in it „some stir, some liveliness, but is still in want of the high standard of the old-time prints and even of the present American conservative printing style“. Mr. Gondos adds „the American printers make no efforts to look for some new manner, for the walk on a beaten path and remain conservative.

Our correspondent has not told anything we should not have established ourselves, studying the Anglo-American manner of printing. We have repeatedly advanced our astonishment at the conservatism observed by the American printers in the cultivation of their style and technics. If we open an American technical journal issued 10-20 years ago, and confront it with a quite new one, we hardly can discover some change of style.

We could not give an exact explanation of it, having not enough knowledge of the local con-

ditions, but we think to seek for the reason of the „conservatism“ in the fact that the American style, well-known in this country, rose to the level of to-day, when the printing styles of Central Europe were not yet influenced by the graphic arts. The axiom „time is money“ was, undoubtedly, well developed in the American business-man even then, and the development of this style, extremely plain but obviously very effective, is in a high degree due to the rational establishment of the typographic production in the sense of the mentioned principle.

Twenty or twenty-five years ago there was not a trace of the influence exercised later by the graphical arts over the printing, and it is also true that at this time the European master printers granted more time for the execution of a jobwork. But in our Old World every kind of art looks back to a past of some hundred, nay thousand years, and the civilized man of to-day cannot withdraw from its taste-forming virtue. The circumstance that the practical graphic art acquired in a relatively short time a most extraordinary importance not only in the world of arts but also in that of business, was a natural cause of that the European, precisely the German letter-founding industry began to adapt their activity to the graphical art, and this made

unavoidable the accomodation of the style of job-composition.

The American printer does not know the practical graphic art, as we understand it, and so it is a matter of course that his style of composition remains conservative, it is the same as it was many years ago. But I don't accept the assertion of Mr. Gondos that the Anglo-American style owns the classicism of ancient prints, for the, usual American prints, with their widely line-spaced arrangement, are far to produce the monumental effect the massive structure and very precise contours of the incunables call forth.

There are, however, American compositions having all qualities of classical works, but such products are to be found — and Mr. Gondos will not contest it — in this country too, despite of the influence of the graphic arts.

We regard the American style nor as classic neither as corresponding to our taste, but on

the other hand we do not depreciate it. It would be unfair to do so, for other country, other style.

Let us still remark that we consider the American manner of composition a natural, unadorned, highly finished production of very excellent effect coming thoroughly up to the conditions of its country.

In the present number we reproduce, on the occasion of the Milwaukee Exhibition, fifteen American advertisements as specimens of advertising composition. They are executed in two forms, one with the original English text, the other with the Hungarian translation of it. The first demonstrates the American, the second our style. The composition and construction of the Hungarian examples show that the designers of them wrought up the material, well fit to any other style, under the influence of the fashionable graphical products and graphical schools of today. This is the characteristic feature of our style and the criterion of our taste.

THE SUPPLEMENTS of this number increased with a special sheet kindly offered by the proprietor of the well-known *Kner Press*, Mr. *Isidore Kner*, Gyoma. This renowned provincial office attempts to recall to life the tradition of the old Hungarian art of printing obliterated in the last century, and to transpose the artistic results of the old Hungarian typography into the modern technics. For this purpose, the famous architect and graphic artist *Louis Kozma* has designed, with assistance of the artistic manager of the office *Emery Kner*, a series of special borders and ornaments executed in stampcutting by the First Hungarian Typefoundry in Budapest. After the same artist completed the series by nearly 200 initials, tail- and headpieces, all engraved in wood. By support of this materials and employing good and clear Roman types the office tries to elaborate its own style based upon the pure typography, and to find out the laws of the ancient art of printing. The firm published a series of books, all made in this style. The first page of the supplement shows some specimens of *L. Kozma's* ornaments, the third page two title-pages of a collection including a new edition of Hungarian classical writers and being executed in the style of the age of the original editions.



The vignettes on the titlepages are also by *L. Kozma*. The *Kner Press* tries also to make in typographical technics other works, e. g. modern jobs and even bonds, shares etc. On the second page of the supplement you can see the reproduction of a share executed after the design of *Edmund Dankó* partly in woodcut partly in photozincography, but for the greater part in typography. The fourth page presents different jobworks designed by *Albert Kner*. The vignettes on the letterhead and on both businesscards are likewise designed and cut in wood by *Albert Kner*, the label in the right corner below has been designed and composed by *Albert Kner*, the vignette in the centre (the publisher's mark) was cut in wood after a design of *L. Kozma*. — For the printing of the special supplement acknowledgement is to be expressed to the first pressman of the *Kner Office*, Mr. *Stephen Kruchió*. — Our usual supplements reproduce on 16 pages 30 examples of composition. The first ten have been designed by *Michael Kun*, the second ten by *John Tábor*, artist, the last by *William Wanko*. — The examples dispersed among the text and the cover are designed by *John Tábor*. — The composing and printing was executed by *A. Czinder*, *B. König*, *D. Kun*, *A. Kner*, *L. Lombár*, *J. Szarvas*, *B. Topits*, *F. Tóth* and *H. Wozniák*.

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